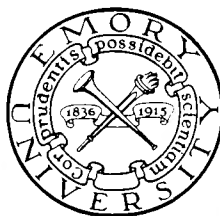
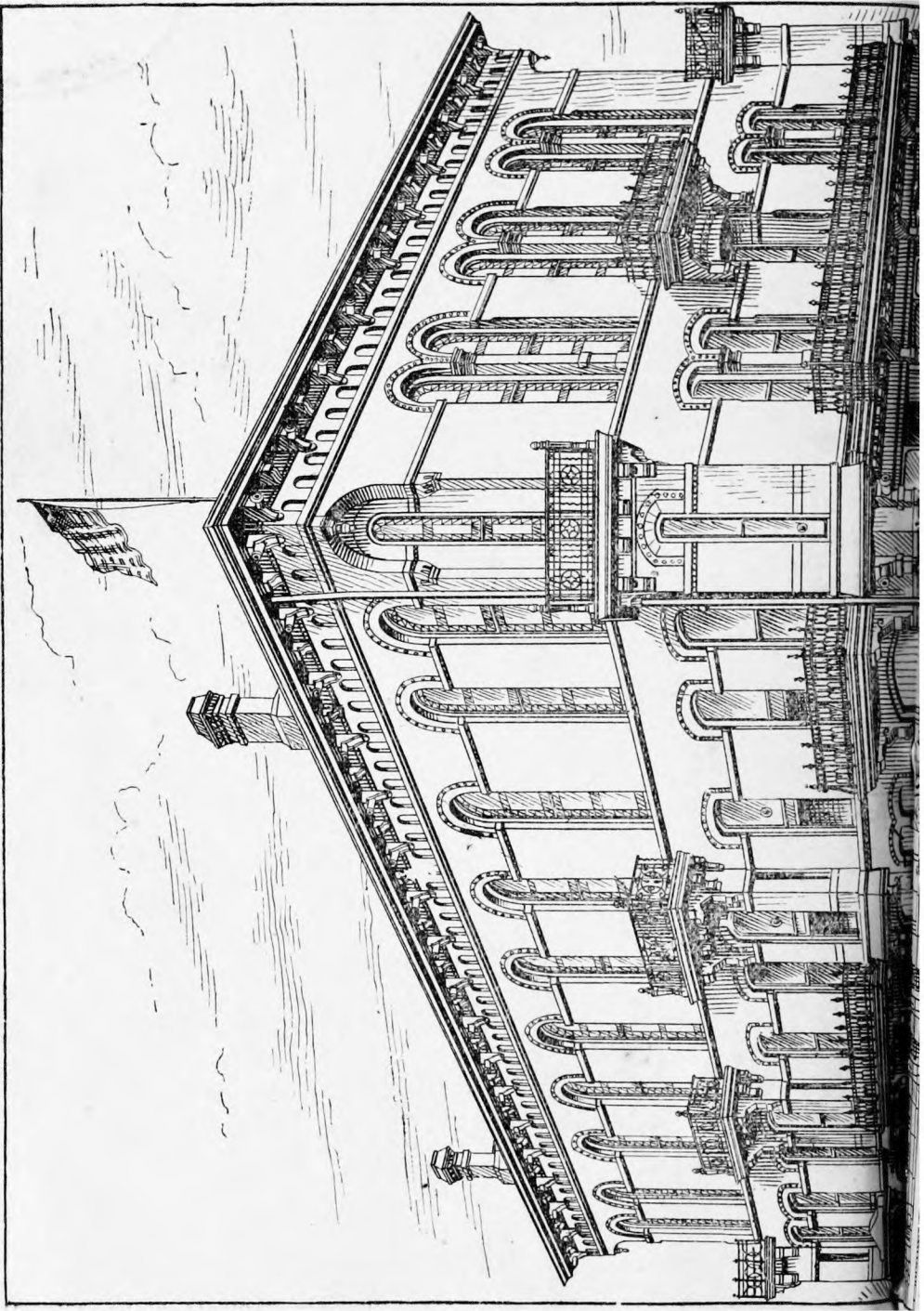
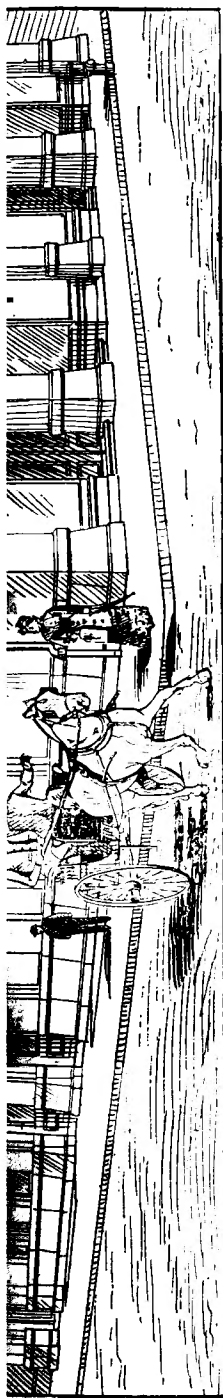


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SAVANNAH VOLUNTEER GUARDS ARMORY

By long odds the finest military building in Savannah is the arsenal of the Savannah Volunteer Guards Battalion. Unique and ornate in exterior appearance, and tastefully finished within, the arsenal would stand well up toward the top of a list of the best specimens of architecture in the city. It has been claimed for the arsenal that it is the finest one in the South, and as yet the claim is undisputed. The site on which it stands on Whitaker and York streets is that of the old State arsenal. The building has three fronts — facing north on President street, west on Whitaker street, and south on York street. The walls are faced with Philadelphia pressed brick, and are trimmed with Alabama limestone and a variety of ornamental bricks. A line of brackets, representing the muzzles of cannon, which extends around the building just under the cornice, gives the structure a military air. This effect is heightened by four bay windows with loops on the sides. One of these windows is set in each corner of the second story. A novel idea of the architect was a V-shaped recess in the Whitaker street face. On every side of the building are verandas and balconies.

The building is 110 feet long, 60 feet in width, and 64 feet from the street pavement to the deck of the domed roof. In excavating for the cellar and foundation, the workmen unearthed two 24-pounders, and the guns have been placed, one on the northeast corner and the other

at the southeast corner of the building, close by the entrances. The first bricks were laid in February, 1885, and just one year later a grand bazar was held in the arsenal and it was thrown open to the public. The cost of erection was close to \$50,000. Three stories are raised on the granite ashlar. The first floor is divided into rooms for stores and a supper room. Two of the store rooms are occupied. The second floor is divided into club rooms, billiard rooms, library, gymnasium, dressing and toilet rooms, officers' quarters and a corridor. The rooms are neatly finished in yellow pine, cypress and California red wood. All of the rooms open on the corridor. The upper panels of the doors are of translucent glass. The third floor is one large hall, with a gallery at the east end. This hall, which is the largest in the city, is used for battalion drills, balls, banquets, bazars and the like. A wide, easy staircase at the east end leads from the bottom of the building to the top. The windows of the second floor all bear the monogram "S. V. G.," cut in a circle. The building is lighted by gas and heated by steam, the boiler being in the cellar. A large range for cooking is fitted up in the basement. There is also a shooting gallery in the basement, and each of the stores has a cellar underneath.

The architect was Mr. J. A. Wood, of New York, and the general superintendent was James G. Cornell, of this city.

GEORGIA'S OLDEST CORPS.

THE SAVANNAH VOLUNTEER GUARDS BATTALION.

Proud History of an Organization that has Existed for
More than Three-Quarters of a Century—The
Men who have Stood at its Head in
Time of Peace and War.

The Savannah Volunteer Guards is the oldest infantry corps in Georgia, and has at all times numbered among its members many of the best citizens of Savannah. In consequence of the loss of the early records of the corps, and the inaccessibility of other sources of accurate information, if, indeed, such are still in existence, it is impossible to give minute details of its history prior to the year 1818.

The corps was organized as a company early in 1802, and, under the militia law of the State then in force, was attached to the 1st Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Division, of Georgia Militia. Its first parade was on May 1st, 1802; and it has ever since, for that reason, adopted and observed that day as its anniversary. Their first parade, according to the statement of the late David Bell, who was then 1st Sergeant, and survived until within a few years past, was formed on the east side of Bull street, in front of the site now occupied by the book-store of Davis Brothers. On the 20th May, 1802, the corps took part in the reception extended to Vice-President Aaron Burr. The uniform at that

time, as was also stated by Mr. Bell, was blue, lightly trimmed with red, with gold bars across the breast.

The hat was what was called in the corps the "leopard skin"—a round patent leather top, with white-plated visor—surrounded by a band of imitation leopard skin with the fur on; a blue plume secured to the hat, and extending from right to left, over the crown, to which it lay close, with an upright plume on the right side, of white, tipped with red.

THE GUARDS' FIRST OFFICER.

Dr. Cumming was the first Captain of the Guards. He was an Irishman by birth—one of the leading and most influential merchants of Savannah at that time, and President of the Branch Bank of the United States. He also assisted in organizing and was the first President of the Hibernian Society, now one of the most important institutions in Savannah. He was lost at sea, on board the steamer Pulaski, on a trip from Savannah to Baltimore. Funeral services were had in honor of his memory, at which the Guards and the Hibernians joined in the proces-

sion. The former fired the customary "three rounds."



CAPT. JOHN CUMMING.

Captain Cumming resigned in 1808, and was succeeded by Captain James Marshall, who proved himself as zealous and efficient an officer as his distinguished predecessor, and under his administration the corps prospered greatly. The commissioned officers under Captain Cumming were James Marshall, First Lieutenant, and James Machin, Ensign; and under Captain Marshall, during his term were: Lieutenants James Machin, Frederick S. Fell, Steele White, Isaac DeLyon and John I. Roberts.

There was lately presented to the battalion, by William Grayson Mann, Esquire, an exceedingly well executed oil portrait of Captain John Cumming, which was received with grateful thanks, and will be suspended in the parlors of the club rooms in the Arsenal.

IN THE WAR OF 1812.

During Captain Marshall's command, the war of 1812 with Great Britain occurred; and, probably upon some sudden occasion, the Guards, with the other companies of Savannah, composing the 1st Regiment Georgia Militia, under the command of Lt. Col. Jas. Johnson, were mustered into the service of the United States for local defense. Besides Capt. Marshall, the officers of the

corps were 1st Lieut. Frederick S. Fell and Ensign John I. Roberts. The enemy not approaching Savannah, however, this service continued only for one month. During this war, also, half of the Savannah Volunteer Guards and the Republican Blues were sent on an expedition against St. Augustine, Florida. There is nothing to inform us how long Capt. Marshall continued to command the Guards. He afterwards became Colonel of the Regiment, and was so as late as 1825, when LaFayette visited Savannah. It is probable that he resigned the captaincy for the purpose of taking the higher commission. He was succeeded, when he did resign, by Capt. Frederick S. Fell, who had been his 1st Lieutenant, as stated.



CAPT. JAMES MARSHALL.

After the death of Captain Marshall, and up to the time of her death, his widow was the devoted friend and patroness of the corps, which frequently enjoyed her gracious hospitality at the family residence on West Broad street, and to which she presented the magnificent stand of battalion colors it now carries.

Captain Fell was a printer, and at one time was one of the proprietors of the *Savannah Republican*.

Although an active officer, he appears not to have been a successful

commander, and the corps is said to have suffered under him a very serious decline in prosperity. But in 1818 a vigorous effort was made to restore it, and Edward F. Tattnall (*clarum et venerabile nomen*) was elected captain.

AN ILLUSTRIOUS COMMANDER.

Captain Tattnall was of that family of Tattnalls so distinguished in the history of Georgia. His father was Josiah Tattnall, who had been the third Captain of the Chatham Artillery, Colonel of the 1st Regiment Georgia Militia, General of the 1st Brigade, United States Senator from Georgia, and Governor of the State. He was the elder and only brother of the celebrated Commodore Josiah Tattnall, who, himself, was a member of the Guards from his early manhood to his death, and whose remains they attended to their last resting place at Bonaventure on June 16, 1871.

Governor Gilmer, in his "Georgians," thus describes Captain Tattnall, whom he knew well when they were members of Congress from Georgia together. "His person was erect and perfectly formed, with delicate hands and small feet. He appeared much larger than he was. His walk was always with a lofty, military gait and measured tread. He was the essence of chivalry. He preferred death to the slightest coloring of dishonor. He risked his life, and was near losing it several times, that he might be considered above wrong doing. He stood by his country and his friends as he stood by himself. He would have gloried in offering up his life if his country's safety had required the sacrifice. If his bravery, generous unselfishness, noble gallantry and vigorous execution had been accompanied by corresponding ready conception and forcible ratiocination, he would have been the great man of his country. He was fitted for command rather than popular service—for rank rather than equality."

THE CORPS' SECOND FOUNDER.

He had been a Captain in the U. S. army in the war of 1812, and had

greatly distinguished himself in an engagement with the British at Point Petre, near St. Marys, Ga. Capt. Tattnall entered upon the command of the Guards vigorously and with zeal. He was evidently a born soldier; and, though a strict disciplinarian and very exacting in his requirements, he soon secured the absolute devotion of his command, and, infusing into it much of his own high, chivalric spirit, enhanced, if he did not create, that intense and admirable *esprit de corps* which has ever since been one of its chief characteristics. Under his leadership it attained a degree of efficiency and prosperity it had never known before, and received an impulse which it has not yet lost. He may be considered, in the largest sense, "the second founder" of the corps. On the occasion of President James Monroe's visit to Savannah on May 8, 1819, the Savannah Volunteer Guards, under his command, took part in the reception and parade. It was probably about the time of his election, and one of the incidents of the revival of prosperity, that the second uniform was adopted—blue, trimmed and slashed with scarlet, and a full scarlet front—very similar to the uniform of the French *gens d'armes* at one time. And, in this connection, a pleasant incident is related as occurring on the occasion of LaFayette's visit to Savannah during his American tour in 1825.

AN INCIDENT OF LAFAYETTE'S VISIT.

It appears that the distinguished visitor landed at the foot of East Broad street. A contemporary account says: "The troops were placed in position on the green, in front of the avenue of trees, their right on East Bay. A more gallant and splendid military display we have never seen; the effect was beautiful; every corps exceeded its customary numbers; many who had not appeared under arms for years shouldered them on this occasion, and the usual pride of appearance and honorable emulation was ten times increased by the occasion. Those who know the volunteer companies of Savannah

will believe this to be no empty compliment."

The incident referred to is that, as LaFayette passed down the line, when he reached Tattnall with his Guards, either affected by the sight of a uniform so familiar to him in his own country, or attracted by the fine appearance of the company, he threw up both hands, and, with sparkling eyes, exclaimed, "*Ah! quels beaux soldats! quels beaux soldats!*"

Capt. Tattnall continued in command until January 14, 1831—longer than any other commander of the corps before or since, save one. During this time he was elected to Congress, and then offered his resignation. But his very name was a power, and the company refused to accept it, preferring to have him nominally in command, though long absent, rather than lose the prestige of his personal reputation. His ill health, too, kept him much from active duty, even when at home. Finally it became imperatively necessary that he should retire, and his resignation was sorrowfully accepted.

There was a long interval between the resignation of Capt. Tattnall and the election of Capt. Jackson, during which Nicholas Bayard, 1st Lieutenant under Tattnall, was in command. He was an officer of fine capacity and highly esteemed, but persistently refused to be elected Captain.

CAPTAIN TATTNALL'S SUCCESSOR.

Captain Tattnall was succeeded by Lieutenant Joseph W. Jackson.

When Captain Tattnall assumed command his subordinate officers were W. C. Daniell and Joseph W. Jackson, Lieutenants, and David Bell, 1st Sergeant. When LaFayette visited Savannah he was met and escorted up the bluff by the Honorable W. C. Daniell, Mayor of Savannah, then an honorary member of the corps.

During Captain Tattnall's term the following commissioned officers served under him: Lieutenants M. W. Stewart, Edwin P. Starr, William P. Hunter, William P. Bowen, Frederick W. Heineman, Nicholas J.

Bayard, Wickliffe Bruen, and Francis Blois.

A superb crayon portrait of Captain Tattnall was presented to the battalion on April 30, 1886, by John R. F. Tattnall, Esquire, which the corps received with joyful enthusiasm, and which will also be suspended in the club parlors in the Arsenal.



CAPT. JOSEPH W. JACKSON.

Captain Jackson, like Tattnall, was a lawyer; and like Tattnall, too, had very much of the soldier in him. If Gov. Gilmer's description of Tattnall, above quoted, can be accepted, there were several respects in which he resembled him. With a similar erect and slender figure, he had a similar stately, measured and military step—he had an equally high and chivalric spirit, and an equally punctilious sense of honor. He was an officer of very great merit, and commanded the perfect confidence of his company. He maintained with great success the discipline, efficiency and *esprit de corps* which his predecessor left him, and transmitted it in his turn to his successor, upon his election to the Colonelcy of the regiment in 1836, his resignation as Captain dating 7th September, 1836.

Captain Jackson was member of Congress, and one of the most dis-

tinguished men of his day. He was a near relative of Gen. Henry R. Jackson, present Minister to Mexico, himself a life member of the Guards.

CHOSEN FROM THE RANKS.

His successor was William Robertson, proprietor of the *Savannah Daily Georgian*, who assumed command on November 16, 1836. He, also, was, at the time of his election, a Lieutenant of the corps. Since Tattnall's time, at least, no one has ever been elected an officer of the corps who was not a member of it. This has been for many years an express rule, and a wise one. Captain Robertson held his commission but a few months—not long enough to make any decided mark upon the history of the corps. He was a most efficient officer. He resigned July 10, 1837.



CAPT. WM. P. BOWEN.

William P. Bowen was the next Captain, elected August 2, 1837. Captain Bowen was a planter in the vicinity of Savannah. He was a gentleman of fine soldierly bearing, and an excellent officer. Under his auspices the corps continued to maintain itself well. He resigned in 1844.

During the terms of Captains Robertson and Bowen the following other commissioned officers served: Lieutenants John C. Starr, George W. Moore, John N. Lewis, and Charles F. Preston.

In Captain Bowen's time a step of great importance to the corps, namely, the procurement of an Act of the Legislature authorizing it to have pay members, the object of which was to lay the foundation of a fund with which, at some future day, to build an armory or arsenal.

When Captain Bowen resigned the company was in great tribulation. Adhering to the rule, that their new commander must be a member, it was feared that they could not find one who would supply the needs of the corps at that time. Fortunately, their choice fell on Dr. Cosmo P. P. Richardsone, then a private in the ranks.

ELEVATED FROM A PRIVATE.

Dr. Richardsone was one of the principal physicians of the city—was very distinguished in his profession—and enjoyed a very large and lucrative practice. He was also a citizen full of public spirit, and took an active part in most of the enterprises of his time designed to promote the progress and improvement of the city. He was a zealous member of the corps, and had been accustomed to participate in its exercises as often as the absorbing nature of professional engagements would permit. He entered upon the duties of the command *con amore*. Tall, very slender, and loosely jointed, wearing spectacles for near-sight—a little careless about his personal appearance—with a highly intellectual face, though the face of a student and scholar rather than a man of action—no one would have suspected how

much of the dash and fire of the military character there was in him.



CAPT. COSMO P. RICHARDSTONE.

Yet he soon proved himself to be an officer of extraordinary merit. Firm, but just and kind in discipline, and always active and earnest in promoting the interests of the company, he soon dispelled the slight clouds which had seemed to be gathering in its sky, and caused it to resume with vigor its prosperous career. He enjoyed the personal affection as well as the respect of his men—as, indeed, his numerous acts of kindness to them deserved—for he would often give his valuable professional services, when needed, to the poorer members, yet in such a way as not to offend their pride. And he was as much respected in the community at large as in the corps.

QUELLING A RIOT.

On one occasion there was a riot at an election, which the police could not quell. Some troops were brought out, and were about to fire on the mob. The pieces were leveled, the fingers were on the triggers, the command "fire" was in the very act of being uttered, when Dr. Richardstone, umbrella in hand, rushed before them and struck up the muskets, at imminent risk to himself. Sometimes, too, he would do a very odd thing—and a queer story is related

of his being called to some obstetric case at the very hour when he had ordered a parade—he was equal to the emergency, however—he went in full uniform, with his sword at his side, to visit the patient—rendered the necessary professional assistance—and drove out immediately to the drill ground, and took command of the company. During his term occurred the incorporation of the corps, without which its subsequent history would have been materially different—without which, indeed, the corps would certainly not be what it now is. In his time, too, occurred another important event in the history of the volunteer military of Savannah.

It has been already stated that the Guards, like the other volunteer military companies of the city, were attached to the 1st Regiment of Georgia Militia. Besides the volunteers, the regiment comprised the companies of ununiformed compulsory militia, organized under the general militia law of the State.

ORGANIZED A SEPARATE COMMAND.

When the whole regiment was assembled, as the law required at stated times, it may be conceived what a motley appearance it presented, with handsomely uniformed and equipped companies interspersed among those of the nonuniformed militia, in which every man was dressed according to his own fancy. Besides, the awkwardness and ignorance of the latter were a source of never ending embarrassment and annoyance, in the evolutions of the drill, to the skillful officers and well instructed soldiers of the volunteers. There were then seven companies of volunteers, including the Chatham Artillery, and an Act of the General Assembly was passed, at their instance, to take them out of the regiment and organize them separately under the name of the "Independent Volunteer Battalion of Savannah," to be commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel, with the privilege of organizing into a regiment as soon as there shall be eight companies. The organization was affected accordingly by the election of A. R. Lawton, then a Lieutenant in the Republican

Blues, to be Lieutenant Colonel. Gen. Lawton is at present a life member of the Guards. W. B. Jackson, then a Sergeant in the Guards, was appointed Adjutant, having obtained permission of the corps to hold the Adjutancy while retaining his non-commissioned office. It was only on battalion parades that the two sets of duties interfered with each other, and the esprit of the corps was such that he was unwilling to resign his Sergeantcy in it to take the staff appointment had it been necessary. This was the origin of the present 1st Volunteer Regiment of Georgia.

THE MEXICAN WAR.

It was during Captain Richardsons's command, too, that the war with Mexico occurred. All the infantry volunteer companies in the city offered their services to the State to make up a regiment, then being formed, the Guards among them. And in the hope that they would be taken, they provided themselves with tents and other equipments for the field. Only one company could be taken, however, and it was decided by lot which it should be. The lot fell on the Irish Jasper Greens. But the Guards' new tents were not useless. The possession of them induced frequent encampments as the years went by, which were of great service in the instruction of the corps, and they were finally worn out in the war which occurred in 1861.

Capt. Richardsons died in commission, to the grief of every member—for, to every one of them, his death was in the nature of a personal loss. The Republican Blues, the long-time friendly rivals of the Guards, both in numbers and efficiency, kindly tendered and rendered their services as the military escort at his funeral, which occurred on February 8th, 1852. The Lieutenants under Captain Richardsons were Thomas J. Bulloch, John C. Hunter, Thomas D. Morel, A. C. Davenport, William F. Holland and George Robertson.

CAPTAIN RICHARDSON'S SUCCESSOR.

Dr. James P. Screven, an exempt private, was then elected Captain on March 19th, 1852, the Lieutenants de-



CAPT. JAMES P. SCREVEN.

clining promotion. Dr. Screven, like Tattnall, was of a family distinguished in the Revolution. He was educated for the profession of medicine, and practiced it when a young man with very marked success and with every prospect of future eminence in it. But he gave it up after some years, and devoted himself exclusively to his large and extensive planting interests. He was now well advanced in life, being in the fifty-second year of his age; yet the Captaincy of the Guards was the first position of a public character he had ever consented to take. But this soon led him on to others; and he became in quick succession, during his command, Mayor of the city, member of the State Senate, and first President of the Savannah, Albany and Gulf Railroad Company, afterwards the Atlantic and Gulf, and now the Savannah, Florida and Western Railway. Notwithstanding, however, the immense demands upon his time of these important and exacting public employments, he applied himself with wonderful fidelity and assiduity to the novel duties of his military office. Guided by his great intelligence, and influenced by his marked and decided character, the corps continued to

prosper and increase. In his time the ancient flint-lock musket was exchanged for that with the percussion lock.

Dr. Screven's pressing public and private engagements induced him to resign on December 22d, 1857. Lieutenants J. B. Ripley and William S. Basinger served under him.

CAPT. JOHN SCREVEN.

His eldest son, the present distinguished Col. John Screven, then an active private, was elected to succeed him, on March 30th, 1858. The company was commanded by 1st Lieut. A. C. Davenport until the election of Capt. John Screven. Lieutenants W. L. Haupt and Gilbert C. Rice served with him. It would be difficult to speak of this gentleman, while he yet "goes in and out among us," in such terms as would be even simply just, without the suspicion of flattery. Nor does it seem to be necessary to do so in this community, where he is so well-known and so much respected and admired. Let it suffice that his pure and elevated character, and his conspicuous and varied virtues, talents, and accomplishments, fit him to adorn any station, civil or military. All these he brought to the service of the Guards, informed by an ardent and unselfish devotion to the corps, and exalted by a high sense of the true relations of the volunteers to the State. Need it be said that it received a fresh and powerful impulse under his administration? Indeed, the accession of Capt. John Screven to the command of it marks a new era in its history—an era in which occurred its expansion into a battalion and its preparation for and entrance upon active warfare—in recounting which there will be occasion to refer less to the personal characteristics of its chief, and more to the conduct of the corps itself at large.

The first event of importance during the command of Capt. John Screven was the acquisition of an armory

THE GUARDS' FIRST ARMORY.

The fund arising from the receipts from pay members under the law heretofore mentioned had been hus-

banded with the utmost care and diligence. Immediately after the passing of the Act a rule was adopted by which all moneys received from that source were set apart as a "reserved fund," and placed in the hands of a special standing committee consisting of the commanding officer for the time being, as *ex officio* chairman, and two other members elected by the corps, not periodically, but permanently, to serve until death or resignation. By judicious investments, not only of the principal, but also of the annual interest, the fund had increased to several thousand dollars.

The corps had, for many years, occupied the northwestern room in the Exchange building, immediately over the council chamber, by the permission of the city government, which, as its members increased, began to be found inconveniently small. It so happened, at this juncture, and in the year 1858, that the congregation of the Second Baptist Church, which had been the result of a secession from the main church, resolved to reunite with the parent stock. The Second Baptist Church, when the separation took place, had bought, for a place of worship, the Unitarian Church, at the southeastern corner of Bull and York streets, just across from the original parade ground of the corps, and when it decided to return to the original society, it also resolved to sell that lot and building. This came to the ears of the Guards' committee on the "reserve fund." The opportunity was too good to be lost. Negotiations were at once commenced which resulted in the purchase by the corps of the edifice and lot on which it stood—the entire reserved fund, as it stood, increased by voluntary contributions from members, being paid in cash, and the residue properly secured.

IN A HOME OF ITS OWN.

It required some time and expense to prepare the building for the use of the corps, but it finally took possession, with the greatest comfort, pleasure and advantage to itself in all ways, and continued to occupy it until the exigencies of the war called it

away. During the occupation of the city by Sherman, in the winter of 1864-5, the armory was used by some of his troops as a sort of guard-house. Through their carelessness it took fire and was destroyed.

Partly in consequence of the acquisition of an armory, a very rapid and unprecedented increase in the members of the corps began now to take place. It not unfrequently happened that at a mere afternoon drill 150 men or more would be out—a number quite too large to be handled with convenience as a single company under the system of tactics then in use. While speculating one day in 1860 upon the probable duration and result of this state of affairs, Captain Screven and 2d Lieutenant Wm. S. Basinger conceived the idea of taking advantage of the charter of the corps to expand it into an independent battalion, the companies of which should not be separate integers aggregated to form the battalion and with no other interests in common, but fractions of one consolidated whole, with all interests in common, and none apart from the whole, after the manner of a regiment in the United States army.

AN INDEPENDENT BATTALION.

The idea was no sooner conceived than steps were taken to carry it into effect—but it was necessary to proceed slowly and cautiously. The first step was to provide that it should be in the discretion of the commanding officer, on any parade when the number present should seem to require it, to make a temporary formation of two companies, assigning the officers and non-commissioned officers according to rank. This was done by resolution of the corps; and a sufficient number of well drilled soldiers were appointed lance-corporals to serve as sergeants and corporals upon such occasions.

This step was rendered easy by the fact that so thorough a system of instruction of non-commissioned officers had long been in use that there was not one who was not well qualified to perform the duties of a commissioned officer as well as his own. This arrangement was frequently resorted

to during the interval which elapsed before the war; and, besides the enhanced interest in drills, and the pride the members took in it, it had the great advantage of providing quite a number of well-instructed non-commissioned officers from whom to select officers when the time for a permanent battalion organization should arrive.

At the same time Hardee's Tactics came into use instead of Scott's, and the Guards adopted them, so far as movements were concerned; but, after careful tests, they decided to adhere to Scott's Manual, as not only more pleasing to the eye, but as easier and more convenient to the soldier. And they used Scott's Manual with Hardee's formations all through the war. Shortly before, too, they had been supplied with 200 Minnie rifles of the Springfield pattern, such as had been introduced into the United States army.

AT FORT PULASKI.

In the meantime South Carolina seceded from the Union—Major Anderson removed his garrison from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter—and Gov. Brown resolved to take possession of the forts and barracks upon Georgia soil. Under his order to that effect, Col. Lawton, of the 1st Volunteer Regiment, took 50 men of the Guards, commanded by Capt. Screven and fully officered as a company, the Oglethorpe Light Infantry, 50 men, commanded by Capt. Francis S. Bartow, and the Chatham Artillery, and with them, on January 3d, 1861, seized Fort Pulaski. While there the Guards had their first experience in the management of heavy artillery, in which they afterwards became so proficient. In the other duties of a garrison they had already been well versed by their frequent encampments.

From this time for several months the volunteer companies took turns of duty at Fort Pulaski. The Guards were there several times. They were there as the 22d February drew nigh. And on that occasion an incident occurred which it may be pleasing to the survivors of the Oglethorpe Light Infantry to remember. The law of the State required of every volunteer

company at least four parades annually, and the 22d February was the day for one of them. Though the Guards were at the fort with a large number, they had left in town enough more to make another full company. The Oglethorpe Light Infantry had left in town only six or eight. Captain Screven did not think it advisable to omit the usual parade of those in town, and Lieutenant Basinger was sent up to take command of them for that purpose. Captain Bartow, hearing of this, requested that his six or eight might parade with the Guards; and it was arranged that they should do so, and should take position as a color guard, carrying the colors of their own company, which should serve for the nonce for the colors of the Guards also, then at Fort Pulaski. This was done, and thus the Guards had the honor of parading that day under the colors of that gallant and distinguished corps.

ON THE EVE OF WAR.

While these events were in progress, and it became more and more apparent that a war was imminent, recruits came pouring in, and the Guards hastened to effect their permanent battalion organization. The plan was, in pursuance of the original idea, to form two companies, A and B, by assigning members to them upon a principle of their own—to select the officers and non-commissioned officers of each company—then to complete the organization by formal elections for officers as prescribed by law, and then elect Captain Screven Major of the battalion. After that recruits were to join the corps as a whole, and be assigned by the Adjutant to the company in which they were to serve. The men were accordingly assigned, officers selected, the existing rules changed to suit the new order of things, and the formal elections were about to proceed. But at this juncture the then Adjutant General of the State thought he had discovered that there could not be a battalion of so few companies as two, commanded by a field officer, under the laws of the State. The situation was embarrassing, but it was promptly met. It

was no time for controversy over questions of law, so the corps submitted for the time. As many officers as was necessary consented at once to go one grade lower. The elections for company officers proceeded as arranged, except that no Captain was elected for Company A, and Capt. Screven commanded the whole under his original commission. There was possibly some danger in the expedient, but the fine esprit of the corps carried it safely through. The only serious inconvenience in the arrangement was the liability of the two companies to be separated when on duty with the rest of the regiment. Of course, if the scheme had been carried out according to the design, it would have involved the withdrawal of the corps from the regiment, as it was at liberty under the law to do, and as it did afterwards.

THE BATTALION'S FIRST OFFICERS.

Thus organized, the officers of the battalion, if it may be so styled just yet, were as follows:

Capt. John Screven, Commanding.
Co. A.—1st Lieut. W. S. Basinger;
2d Lieut. Gilbert C. Rice; Ensign J. C. Habersham.

Co. B.—Capt. A. C. Davenport; 1st Lieut. Geo. W. Stiles; 2d Lieut. Thos. F. Screven; Ensign M. H. Hopkins.

The battalion was mustered into service of the Confederate States in March, 1861, for two months, and assigned to duty as the garrison of a battery at Thunderbolt, about 4½ miles from Savannah. During its stay there, it had an opportunity to increase its familiarity with the use of heavy guns, and, by constant drills, attained a very high degree of proficiency as infantry. No enemy appeared; and the only ripple of excitement that occurred was the detachment of Lieut. Basinger with his company and a detail from Company B, under Lieut. Stiles, 100 men in all, to re-inforce the rest of the regiment, then on Tybee Island, and supposed to be threatened with an attack by a force from the enemy's ships at that time hovering along the coast. No attack was made, however, and the detachment returned in a few days. At the end of the two

months the corps returned to the city, and was dismissed for a time—though notified that it would shortly be expected to enter service again, and for a longer period.

AT GREEN ISLAND.

According to that notice it was mustered for six months, and immediately sent to take charge of a much larger and heavier battery on Green Island, near the mouth of the Vernon River.

The officers who accompanied the corps on this occasion were the same as before, except that Ensign Edward Padelford, Jr., had taken the place of Ensign Habersham, who had accepted the post of Asst. Surgeon of the regiment, and Co. B went under the command of Lieut. Stiles. Lieut. Rice was detailed to act as Adjutant. Here, with better opportunities than before, both officers and men applied themselves with great assiduity to exercise in the use of the heavy artillery, in which they soon acquired marked skill. Infantry drill, too, was vigorously prosecuted. Here, too, Capt. Screven developed his talent for engineering, which was exceedingly useful to his command and to the public service. During the stay at this post some gunboats attempted to ascend the river, but were deterred by a few well-directed shots from the battery. No other event of interest occurred. But the corps received large numbers of recruits from time to time.

Before this period of service expired, it became evident that the war would assume huge proportions and be of long duration, and the corps, almost to a man, resolved to muster again for the war. But they decided to do so with at least three companies, which number, it was understood, according to the views of the Adjutant General of the State above mentioned, would entitle them to an independent organization and a field officer to command. Information was obtained that, although the military laws of Congress would not admit of the reception of a battalion of less than four companies organized in the ordinary manner, yet if the Guards should offer as an existing

recognized battalion under the law of Georgia, they would be received as such, though the number of companies should be less than four. It was not considered prudent just yet to attempt a fourth company; but a third was formed by taking as many members from Companies A and B as could be spared.

THREE COMPANIES ORGANIZED.

And officers and non-commissioned officers were chosen. The officers were as follows:

Co. A—Capt. W. S. Basinger; 1st Lieut. Thos. F. Screven; 2d Lieuts. Wm. H. King and Frederick Tupper.

Co. B—Capt. Geo. W. Styles; 1st Lieut. Edwd. Padelford, Jr.; 2d Lieuts. Edwin A. Castellaw and Geo. D. Smith.

Co. C—Capt. Gilbert C. Rice; 1st Lieut. Geo. M. Turner; 2d Lieuts. Jno. R. Dillon and Eugene Blois.

This organization was approved by the Adjutant General of the State, and commissions were accordingly issued to the officers above named as such-and-such officers in such-and-such companies in the Battalion of Savannah Volunteer Guards. And the corps, being thus an existing battalion of volunteers under the law of the State, was received as such by the Confederate authorities, and mustered into the service for the war at Green Island on or about March 1st, 1862. But it was, for the time, under the command of Capt. Basinger, as senior Captain, there having not been time enough for the election of a Major, and it being understood that that election should take place under the law of the Confederacy at the earliest convenient day.

Of course this terminated the connection of the Guards with 1st Volunteer Regiment, and henceforth their paths lay apart. John Screven was commissioned by the Confederate Government as Major of Artillery and ordered to report to the commanding officer at Savannah, Gen. A. R. Lawton, who assigned him to the command of the Savannah Volunteer Guards Battalion. A formal election was then held, and he was elected Major of the battalion, so he was doubly commissioned.

BACK FROM GREEN ISLAND.

A few days after this muster, the six months for which the Guards had been sent to Green Island, came to an end, and they were relieved from duty, returned to the city, and were dismissed for a month—partly for recreation, partly to obtain recruits.



COL. JOHN SCREVEN.

About April 1, 1862, the corps re-assembled, with its numbers largely increased. The 200 Minie rifles with which it was supplied being enough for only two companies, Co. C was armed with the English Enfield rifle of the same calibre. And it is safe to say that it would have been difficult to find an equal number of troops better qualified for the patriotic duty to which they had devoted themselves. All the professions and occupations were represented in the corps. Besides a high degree of general intelligence, it possessed skillful artisans in every variety of handicraft. There was scarcely any species of work which the exigencies of the service could call for that the corps could not furnish superior workmen to do. From the most delicate preparations of the chemical laboratory to the simplest mechanical or agricultural labor, there was nothing that it had not some one to do, and do well. In their previous service the men had learned much of engineering and ordnance work, they were fine artillerymen and excellent shots with every species of gun, and in the

drill and duties of the infantry soldier they had no superiors. Above all, they were animated by an intelligent and ardent patriotism, and the *esprit de corps* which had its origin in Tattnall's time was burning as brightly as ever.

A few more recruits being still desired, the battalion was encamped for a few weeks in the immediate vicinity of the city. Thence it was removed to Fort Boggs, a fine large work on the bluff about two miles below the city, overlooking Fort Jackson and the river, and constituting the extreme left of the inner line of defenses.

AT FORT BOGGS.

Here it had need of many of its resources in completing the fort, in mounting and dismounting heavy guns, in preparing and adjusting ammunition and the implements of the ordnance branch of the service, in the innumerable variety of things necessary to the complete efficiency of a work of defense.

Shortly after the establishment at Fort Boggs, Major Screven assumed command. The staff was organized, and the duties of its various departments put in regular and systematic train. The corps had become, to all practical intent, regular troops, and, henceforth, all its duties and affairs were conducted as nearly as possible according to the Articles of War and the Army Regulations.

As the summer advanced, the unhealthiness of the situation began to tell seriously upon the command. The sick list was enormous—every officer and soldier, with one solitary exception, was sick sooner or later. For the sake of health, it was removed to different places in the neighborhood, first one, then another, until the succeeding winter set in—but always in charge of Fort Boggs, where it was obliged to maintain a small guard, relieved daily. Several valuable lives were lost through this sickness—among them Lieut. Pateford, of Co. B; and others never entirely recovered their health during the whole war. During this period, too, the command suffered seriously by the detachment

of Major Screven, whose services as an engineer were required in placing obstructions in the Savannah river below Fort Jackson.

THE 18TH GEORGIA BATTALION.

During the winter of 1862-3, the battalion received for the first time a number in the line of Georgia battalions. The officers and clerks in the war office at Richmond seemed unable to understand how it was that a battalion should have a name and not a number; and many embarrassing and annoying mistakes resulted. For the purpose of putting a stop to these, and for that purpose only, Capt. Basinger, then in command, represented the case to the War Department, and asked for a number. The number 18 was given, and thenceforth, in official communications, the corps was commonly styled the 18th Georgia Battalion. Of course, however, every one understood that it was still the Savannah Volunteer Guard—it had no intention of losing its identity as such.



COL. W. S. BASINGER.

In the spring of 1863 Major Screven resigned the command. He was President of the Atlantic and Gulf Railroad—a line of communication and supply very important to the Confederate Government—and his constant personal attention to the management of it was so much needed that he could not resist the pressure of the Government upon

him to resume it. It was with infinite regret that the Guards gave him up.

In 1864 the defenses of Savannah were nearly stripped of troops. In this emergency Major Screven raised, under the direction of Gen. Henry H. Jackson commanding, a local battalion of five companies, enrolled from the employes of the railroads, mechanics and others in the city, and was assigned to its command with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Under the law of Georgia an election to fill the vacancy was in order. But it was universally understood that when the corps, with the consent of the State, entered the Confederate service, it became subject to the law of the Confederacy governing such cases, and the law of the State and its own rules were suspended. Under the law of the Confederacy applicable to the case, Capt. Basinger, of Co. A, as the next officer in rank, was entitled to succeed, and a commission was accordingly issued to him as Major, bearing date May 20, 1863. Lieut. T. F. Screven, under the same rule, became Captain of Co. A, and the other officers of that company went up each one grade, Sergt. P. N. Raynal being elected to the Junior Lieutenantcy.



CAPT. THOMAS F. SCREVEN.

EXPEDITIONS FROM FORT BOGGS.

The battalion remained in charge of Fort Boggs until July, 1863, slowly recovering from the effects of the sickness of the previous summer. The monotony of this duty was somewhat relieved, however, by two expeditions on which it was sent—one in October, 1862, to support a battery at Coffee Bluff, on the Little Ogeechee River, reported to be threatened by gunboats—the other in June, 1863, to Sansavilla, in Wayne county, to repel an expected ascent of the Altamaha River by the gunboats which had just destroyed Darien. On the former occasion, Maj. Screven was in command—on the latter, Maj. Basinger. No enemy appeared, however, and all the battalion got by these expeditions was some very severe marching and some experience in field duty.

It was during this service at Fort Boggs, and before Major Screven's resignation, that Major John B. Gallie, a former Captain of the Chatham Artillery, was killed in defending Fort McAllister against an attack by the enemy's ships. His remains were taken to his home in the city, and the Guards were detailed by the General in command as the funeral escort. On July 10th, 1863, a large force landed from the enemy's fleet off Charleston, made an attack on Morris Island, and commenced the celebrated siege of Battery Wagner, one of the principal defenses of that city. On the 9th, in expectation of such an attack, a reinforcement was sent over from Savannah, consisting of a part of the 1st Volunteer Regiment, under Col. Olmstead; the 12th Ga. Battalion, Lieut. Col. Capers; and the Savannah Volunteer Guards.

AT BATTERY WAGNER.

The reinforcing troops reached Battery Wagner after midnight of the 10th, and found the utmost confusion apparently prevailing. Without undertaking, in so brief a sketch as this, a minute description of the work and its surroundings; it is enough to say that the Guards were immediately posted in its most advanced salient—certain, by its position, to be the point of the expected

attack. The attack was made in force just before dawn on the 11th. For the details of it any interested reader is referred to the general history of the war.

At the sound of the first shots from the pickets the Guards were at the parapet of their bastion, arms in hand and ready. There were one or two guns in the bastion, but the gunners were not there.

The attacking force was close upon the heels of the pickets as the latter came in. As soon as they were near enough to be plainly seen in the darkness which prevailed, which was not until they were within fifty or one hundred yards from the counterscarp, the command to fire was given and the Guards delivered a volley from both fronts of their bastion with deadly effect.

This was the first discharge from the fort. It checked the enemy—the gunners got in to their pieces; in a moment the whole front of the fort was blazing with a rapid fire of infantry and artillery—and though the attack was vigorously pressed, the enemy were soon repulsed in disorder. The loss of the enemy in killed, wounded and prisoners was 330. The loss of the garrison was 10 in all—7 of whom were of the Guards—4 killed and 3 wounded. Among the wounded was Lieut. Tupper, of Co. A. The entire loss was small, but the distribution of it makes it apparent that the Guards bore the brunt of the attack. And it is but small commendation to say that their conduct was worthy of their history and reputation, and elicited from the Commanding General marked comment on what he styled the "remarkable individuality" of the corps.

DURING THE SIEGE.

The enemy now proceeded to besiege in form. And their batteries and sharp-shooters poured in a continual storm of shells and bullets, day and night. Early every day the enemy's ships drew near, and thus a constant cross-fire was maintained. The Guards being often called on for artillerists to man the guns engaged with the ships.

The picket duty was severe; and those who remained in the fort were

kept at work all night repairing the damages of the day. Water was scarce and brackish—it was impossible to cook food, and meat was eaten raw. The heat of the sun was intense, and aggravated by the glare from the water and the white sea sand of which the island is composed—while every night brought cold rains which chilled to the very bone.

The siege continued fifty-eight days, and the defense became more arduous and difficult as the enemy's works advanced. It would have been impossible for any troops to endure it so long without relief. But, fortunately, communications, at least at night, were not cut off, and the garrison was frequently relieved. The Guards' first tour of duty was for eight days—they afterwards returned several times for five or six days at a time—and thus bore their full part in the defense—and lost some, though a few, valuable members. They were not there when the place was abandoned to the enemy.

ON JAMES ISLAND.

Their periods of rest were spent in bivouac on James Island. They were without shelter, and the heat of the day, alternating with the cold rains of the nights, made the situations very trying. Added to this was constant picket duty, and labor on the works on James Island, and in moving and mounting heavy guns, in which they were found too expert for their comfort.

Battery Wagner was abandoned late in August, and in about a fortnight the Guards were ordered to Sullivan's Island, on the other side of the harbor, to occupy Battery Marion. This was nothing more than a parapet of about 400 yards in length, connecting Battery Bee with Fort Moultrie, with chambers for guns, and magazines, and bomb-proofs here and there. The guns were 10-inch columbiads and mortars of the same calibre. The battalion not only manned the guns, but furnished their own infantry support. Here it remained until the following May, but not by any means in idleness. A constant fire was maintained by both sides nearly every day and night, and sometimes all day and all night,

particularly from the mortar batteries, and the troops may be said to have lived under fire during that period of eight months.

ORDERED TO VIRGINIA.

Suddenly, in May, 1864, there came an order for the corps to go to Virginia to join the army of Gen. Lee. It was received with rapturous cheers—the men were tired of the monotony of garrison life. Arriving in Virginia, the corps was stationed for a time at Mattoax, where the Richmond and Danville Railroad crosses the Appomattox river upon a pretty high bridge. Another bridge, of almost equal importance crossed a tributary of the Appomattox a couple of miles from Mattoax. The destruction of either of these bridges would have been a great disaster—some cavalry raids of the enemy had approached very near them—and the Guards were sent to aid in guarding them.

A battalion of Virginia reserves were sent to join them, and an engineer officer to throw up earthwork for artillery, which soon arrived. The Virginians were raw and inexperienced, and wholly undrilled; and the officers, non-commissioned officers, and even some of the privates, were all set hard at work instructing them in the rudiments of duty. In this sort of duty, but without by any means neglecting their own drill, the corps remained at Mattoax until October.

JOINED LEE'S ARMY.

It was then ordered to the general line of the army, and posted in the trenches on the north side of the James river, near Chaffin's Bluff. Indeed there was but one battalion between the Guards and the river. It so happened that just at this part of the line there were six battalions connecting with each other. These six battalions were put together in a small brigade by themselves—the battalions being distributed into pairs, each pair commanded by a field officer—and Col. Crutchfield placed in command of the whole—an arrangement altogether unique, but found very convenient. This brigade was commanded by Gen. G. W. C. Lee.

Major Basinger commanded the pair of battalions composed of the Guards and Major Robt. Stiles' Chaffin's Bluff battalion—Capt. Rice taking immediate command in the disability of Capt. Stiles, who was sick.

The corps had now its first experience of a winter campaign in a higher latitude than they had been accustomed to. It will be remembered that that winter (1864-5) was unusually severe. The men had no shelter worth the name—the most fortunate having nothing more than the ragged remains of old tents. Fuel, too, was scarce, and procurable only at a considerable distance from the lines. The rations then issued consisted only of a pound of corn meal and a third of a pound of bacon per diem. The picket duty was extremely severe; bomb-proofs were ordered to be built, and details of the troops were made for this purpose; it was absolutely necessary to keep up an interior guard.

HARD LIFE IN CAMP.

With one thing and another officers and men were on hard duty forty-eight hours out of every seventy-two. Added to this, the opposing forces were so very near each other that extraordinary vigilance and alertness were imperatively required, and the entire Confederate line was under arms, with every command at its post prepared for action at least an hour before day every morning through that trying season. And when the weather was at its worst, there was the greatest need for these precautions. The spirit of the corps, however, was so high that it could have endured even more than these things. But fears for the result of the war began to creep into the minds of even the most sanguine—the Confederacy appeared to be losing ground day by day—Grant's immense host seemed to be surely closing in upon the diminishing numbers of Gen. Lee.

Gen. Lee found himself obliged to abandon Richmond to its fate. On the night of April —, 1865, the troops began to withdraw from the lines. As the Guards marched sadly and silently across the bridge which spanned the James near Drewry's

bluff, one of the Confederate gunboats lying there, which had been set on fire, blew up with a tremendous explosion, which filled the air with flame and smoke and bursting shells, and fragments flying far.

It seemed the signal for the downfall of the Confederacy

THE MARCH OUT OF RICHMOND.

The march went on all night and the next day—then a rest for a few hours was taken, and the march resumed before dawn of the second day. The rations the men started with soon gave out—expected supplies were not received—worn out with hunger, fatigue, and want of sleep, the troops could hardly drag along. But the Guards, being in the van of their brigade for the time, put their faithful musicians in their front to cheer the weary march. These were negroes who had long served the corps in peace, accompanied them through all the war, contemptuously resisted all invitations to desert, and stood by the colors to the last. The shrill fifes of old Joe and Henry, and the rattling drums of George Postell and Louis Ross, as they made the old Virginia woods ring with the strains so often played at home, woke up the flagging spirit of the men, and helped them for a time to move cheerfully. But in vain. The enemy's cavalry began to press the column on the left, and on April 6th, the rear-guard of Gen. Lee's retreating army was brought to bay near Sailors creek.

Gen. Gordon's corps was the true rear-guard. But in the various operations and movements of that day Gen. Ewell's corps got into the rear, and had, in its turn, become the rear-guard by force of circumstances. Gen. Custis Lee's division, to which the Guards were attached, was in Gen. Ewell's corps. The army was hemmed in on three sides by overwhelming odds, but the men did not know it; some shots had been fired at them, but they supposed it was only from some light artillery attached to small bodies of cavalry hovering in the distance on the left, and imagined that the front was clear.

HEMMED IN BY THE ENEMY.

The illusion was dispelled by a rather odd incident. The corps was in the act of fording Sailors creek, the color-bearer was put in the middle of it, carrying the color-staff inclined upon his shoulder, when a spent conical rifle bullet struck the staff where it rested on his shoulder, splitting it exactly in the middle, and just burying itself in the crack. "Where did that bullet come from?" was the exclamation. "From ahead, of course." "Then the army is likely to be surrounded." They knew then they had a fight on hand.

On that day Gen. Lee's division was in the rear of the corps—Crutchfield's brigade in the rear of the division—the Guards at the rear of the brigade. The brigade was halted for a time a few hundred yards from the creek, and about half way up the slope of a long acivity. While pausing there, some small advanced parties of the enemy appeared upon the ground the brigade had just passed over—then a battery of light artillery—then regiment after regiment of infantry. The order was given to form line faced to the rear. The Guards began the movement, and thus became the extreme right of the new line. Major Stiles' battalion came next; and with the colors of these two battalions the line was established for the division. Some of the troops were new, but the whole evolution was effected with admirable order and regularity. Scarcely had the line been formed when the enemy's artillery commenced to fire, and then the battle began. General details would be out of place—we are only concerned with the Guards.

THE FIGHT AT SAILORS CREEK.

When the enemy's infantry began to ascend the slope to attack, the Confederate troops holding their fire until they should get quite near, a strong body was discovered making its way through a thicket of pines on the right of the Guards so as to take them on the flank and rear. Fortunately, they were impeded and disordered by the thickness of the grove. Maj. Basinger happened at the mo-

ment to be near the extreme right of the Guards.

There was no time for deliberation. He immediately marched the battalion by the right flank obliquely to the rear, fixing bayonets as they went, so as to face this unexpected enemy, and, reforming his line, attacked at once with the bayonet, while they were yet entangled in the wood. The Guards were but 85 that day, and nothing but the disorder of the enemy in the thicket saved them.

A DECISIVE ACTION.

Their attack was successful; the enemy was driven off, with the loss of two regimental flags and many killed, but with serious loss to the Guards also. The battalion then returned to the original line to take its part in the main battle. But again the enemy came through the thicket of pines, and were met in the same manner as before. But they were too strong, and the corps had suffered too much in the former attack; the enemy were checked, but all of the Guards who escaped with their lives fell into their hands as prisoners. It was afterwards ascertained that these attacks through the pine thicket had been made by a force of three regiments, half advancing at a time, and that their loss in the encounter was about 275 men. The disorder caused in their advance by the pine thicket was the only thing that rendered such a result possible. But without this combat, the whole division would have been assailed on its flank and rear and inevitably destroyed.

As it was, the division, thus guarded on its right, repulsed two attacks upon themselves, and finally, attacking in their turn, drove the enemy from the field, and killed and wounded, it was said on good authority, about 5,000 of his men, having themselves only 2,250 engaged. But in the very moment of their success a courier came from Gen. Ewell announcing that he had surrendered himself and his entire corps. So the division found itself in the same moment, victors, yet prisoners of war.

In this affair the loss of the Guards was very heavy—amounting to 30 killed and 22 wounded of the 85 engaged, and every officer but one

being either killed or wounded. The killed were buried on the field by the enemy; the remains of such as could be identified were at a later day brought to Savannah and buried in the lot of the corps in Laurel Grove Cemetery. The survivors were sent, the wounded to hospitals, the unwounded to Northern prisons—some to Point Lookout, the Major and Lieutenant Gue to Johnson's Island. When they were released, these remnants of a once proud and prosperous command strayed sadly home, one by one, to mourn their disappointed hopes and the ruin of their country, and face, as they best might, the new difficulties that lay before them.

As long as carpet-bag rule prevailed in Georgia, no effort to re-organize was made by any of her volunteers. The Guards, by occasional meetings and by attending in a body the funerals of deceased members, endeavored to maintain their corporate existence, and to preserve their property. But as soon as the carpet-bag government was ignominiously expelled, and James M. Smith became Governor, the corps, encouraged by him, determined to resume its usual functions. As soon as this determination was known, large numbers of new members joined, and the work of re-organization was undertaken. All the surviving officers and non-commissioned officers resigned—the new members were assigned to companies—officers of all grades were chosen and elected—Major Basinger to the command. The battalion staff was organized—the present uniform adopted—the drum corps collected together again—and the rules revised. Arms were soon furnished by the State, and, with restored strength, the corps made its first parade under the new order of things on the 19th day of January, 1873.

In the course of time a band was organized and permanently attached to the battalion. Major Basinger obtained from the State the use of the arsenal for a place of meetings and drills, and the corps had it repaired and improved at its own expense. Buildings were erected on the

lot where the armory had stood, from which a revenue was derived—financial affairs received due attention, and the reserved fund put on a proper footing.

In 1879, in pursuance of a law of the State then passed, which required all battalion commanders to be Lieutenant Colonels, such a commission was sent to the commanding officer; and the corps was numbered third in the list of volunteer infantry battalions.

In August, 1882, Col. Basinger resigned; and Lieut. Col. William Garrard, the present energetic and popular commander, was elected to succeed him.

At the time of Col. Basinger's resignation, he had been a member for thirty-one years, and from the day of his admission to membership, almost immediately contemporaneous with his promotion to a non-commissioned office, he was distinguished for his devotion and for his high soldierly qualities, through every grade of office within the gift of the corps. He was inspired by all its gallant traditions, and at no period in its history has it had a commander who sustained its honor with more loyalty, intelligence and skill. A successful lawyer and a man of unusual attainment, he devoted his unwearying industry and highly trained powers to meet all the requirements of a military position, trying in peace, but imperious in war, and he failed in none. It was chiefly through his efforts that the Guards became skilled in heavy artillery. To this branch of the service, Col. Basinger, who is an accomplished mathematician, gave close, studious attention during much of the war, becoming the author of full, systematic tables of trajectories, and was appointed, while stationed at Battery Wagner, one of an army commission to report on the proper form of heavy artillery.

Of his conduct in battle, there can be no better panegyric than the record of the Guards in the bloody dramas at Battery Wagner and Sailors creek.

Col. Basinger was longer in chief command than any of his predecessors.

sors. Although previously in acting command, he was Major and Lieutenant Colonel of the battalion during about nineteen years.

The commissioned officers of the battalion under Maj. Screven were as follows:

Co. A—Capt. W. S. Basinger; Lieuts. Thomas F. Screven, W. H. King, John F. Tupper.

Co. B—Capt. G. W. Stiles; Lieuts. Ed. Padelford, E. A. Castellaw, George D. Smith.

Co. C—Capt. G. C. Rice; Lieuts. G. M. Turner, John R. Dillon, Eugene Blois.

Lieut. Dillon, Acting Adjutant.

Capt. G. C. Rice, Acting Quartermaster.

Lieut. W. H. King, Acting Commissary.



CAPT. JOHN R. DILLON,

Adj't. 18th Georgia Battalion, S. V. G.

After Maj. Basinger assumed command, Lieut. T. F. Screven was made Captain of Co. A, and the following became Lieutenants, namely: P. N. Raynal, W. E. Gue and W. D. Grant, and E. P. Starr was appointed Adjutant of battalion. After the war ended the officers under Maj. Basinger were:

Co. A—Capt. George W. Stiles; Lieuts. P. N. Raynal, A. A. Winn, E. P. Starr.

Co. B—Capt. T. F. Screven; Lieuts. J. C. Habersham, H. H. Woodbridge, Malcolm Maclean.

Company C—Capt. Jno. R. Dillon; Lieuts. F. R. Sweat, H. C. Cunningham, John Reilly.

Lieut. Sweat was afterwards appointed Adjutant, and Lieuts. Raynal and Cunningham became respectively Captains of their companies, and the following became Lieutenants at various times, namely: C. J. Barie, C. R. Maxwell, H. R. Symons, W. F. Symons, Cuthbert Barnwell, Joe C. Thompson, L. C. Strong, M. A. Barie, J. A. Cronk, J. W. Fretwell, W. P. Hunter (Adjutant).

Major Basinger became Lieutenant Colonel in October, 1879.

Thereafter the following became commissioned officers in the battalion: Lieuts. O. H. Lufburrow, J. G. Heyward and W. H. Turner, before Lieut. Col. Garrard took command.

The present commissioned officers of the battalion are: Lieut. Col. Wm. Garrard, commanding; 1st Lieut. W. W. Williamson, Adjutant; 1st Lieut. J. P. S. Houston, Surgeon; 1st Lieut. Jno. M. Bryan, Commissary; 1st Lieut. C. P. Rossignol, Quartermaster.

Co. C (Right Company)—Capt. Henry C. Cunningham; 1st Lieut. John Reilly.

Co. B (Left Company)—Capt. John L. Hammond; 1st Lieut. R. R. Richards; 2d Lieut. Joseph A. Cronk.

Co. A (Centre Company)—Capt. Robert H. Footman; 1st Lieut. James L. Taylor; 2d Lieut. John W. Fretwell.

Lieut. Col. Garrard was elected from the ranks, and having been commissioned on 23d December, 1882, took active command of the corps, on the parade of the 19th January, 1883, on which occasion a handsome sword and belt was presented to him by the corps. The corps took part in the sesqui-centennial celebration of the settlement of Savannah, during which the handsome silk flag which it now carries was presented to it, as the oldest infantry command in Georgia, by Gov. Alexander H. Stephens, an honorary member of the corps.

The commanding officer immediately addressed himself to the finances of the corps, obtaining a reduction of the interest that was then being paid upon the corps' debt, and conceiving the idea that the property known as the Old State Arsenal might be obtained from the State as a site for an armory, obtained the consent of the City Council of Savannah to the execution of a deed of the reversionary interest of the city in said property, provided, an Act of the Legislature could be obtained directing the sale of said property by the State to the corps, the State merely having the right of user of the same for arsenal purposes, and the city holding the reversionary interest. To this end he prepared a bill, and went before the Legislature in the summer session of 1883, and, after a great deal of labor, succeeded in getting the same passed, and it became a law on the 21st of September, 1883. By this Act providing for the sale of the western half of lot letter G, in Percival Ward, the Governor was directed to execute to said military corporation a deed, conveying all the right, title, interest and estate of the State of Georgia in said property. The news of the passage of this Act was received with great enthusiasm by the corps, as it was the corner-stone upon which the magnificent structure now known as The Arsenal was erected. It should be mentioned in passing, that upon the death of Gov. Alexander H. Stephens, the Savannah Volunteer Guards sent a strong detachment of over 100 men, upon a few hours' notice, to Atlanta, under command of Lieut. Col. Garrard, which took part in the funeral service, being accorded the right of the line.

An advantageous sale was made by the corps of its property on the corner of York and Bull streets, the site of the first armory, for the sum of \$16,100, with the proceeds of which the debt of the corps was paid off, amounting to more than half said purchase money, and the balance became the nucleus of the building fund. A building committee was appointed, consisting of Lieut. Col. Garrard, Capt. H. C. Cunningham,

Capt. John L. Hammond, Capt. R. H. Footman, and Honorary Member W. S. Basinger, to take charge of the erection of the arsenal.

Col. Garrard announced the project of a fair, to raise money to add to the building fund, and the corps went to work upon the same with a will during the fall and winter months of 1884 and the early part of 1885, the result of which was the Guards' fair, which opened upon the 15th day of April, 1884, and lasted for two weeks, in Catholic Library Hall, on Drayton street, the Hon. R. E. Lester, Chairman of the Fair Committee, delivering the address of welcome, the battalion being present in full uniform, with side arms. During the progress of this fair many interesting events occurred, among which was the visit of Gov. Henry D. McDaniel to Savannah as the guest of the Guards battalion, who, during his stay in Savannah, reviewed the volunteer forces of the city and received many attentions. The fair was a success financially, but, after the closing of the same, it took several months to wind up the different schemes which were formulated by it, and then Col. Garrard recommended to the corps the purchase of more ground to add to the western half of lot letter G, and to this end negotiations were opened with the Kollock family, owners of the adjoining property, which resulted in the purchase of a strip of 20 feet by 60 feet, which, added to the original space, gave to the corps a site 60 feet by 110 feet for the purpose of building. The building committee, having with great care considered the plans of the proposed building executed by Mr. J. A. Wood, of New York, architect, adopted the same, and began the demolition of the old arsenal building in the winter of 1884. In excavating for the new building, two old cannon were found buried beneath the arsenal, which now appear at the entrances on York and President streets, mounted and jutting over the pavement.

In December, 1884, the scheme of the arsenal bazar, to raise more funds for said building was promulgated,

the said bazar to be held during the following winter. The corps secured quarters for itself in Oglethorpe Barracks during the building of the arsenal, which consumed the entire year 1885, and a portion of 1886, the period being about eighteen months, in demolishing the old building, digging out the foundation for the new, and erection of the latter. Although the building was incomplete, the corps moved its guns and other property into it, and marched from same on 22d February, 1886, for the first time. At the meeting of February 19th, 1885, a scheme of life membership was devised, which materially added to the building fund, and a few months later an issue of six per cent. bonds was directed, which bonds were easily disposed of at par, and the proceeds applied to the building fund. In the winter of 1885, arrangements were begun, looking to the opening of the arsenal bazar, which was opened in the drill room of the arsenal on February 11th, 1886, lasting about ten days, and resulting in a financial success; proceeds applied to the building fund.

The arsenal is, with few exceptions, completed, and the Building Committee expect to turn it over to the corps by the regular meeting in June, 1886. A description of this building is given elsewhere. It has been built with great care. All the materials used in the same, of every description, were of the best quality which could be obtained, and the excellence of the work is due in a great measure to the skill of Savannah mechanics.

The battalion proposes to fit up the club rooms immediately, and thereafter to occupy it as a military club house. It will be heated by steam. There is a large range in the cellar for cooking purposes, and the building is supplied with an elevator. Every convenience which ingenuity can suggest, it seems, has been supplied throughout the building, for all possible wants of the corps. Necessarily the erection of this magnificent home of the corps has increased its efficiency, enthusiasm and numbers. During the period devoted to this purpose, which has been substantially three years past, the corps has borne the

strain upon it financially and otherwise, nobly.

The Guards have erected monuments to two of their deceased commanders. The first is a plain, but strong marble shaft in Bonaventure Cemetery (formerly the family seat of the Tattnalls) to Captain Tattnall, and bears the following inscription on its western face :

SACRED
to the memory of
EDWARD FENWICK TATTNALL,
who died in Savannah,
on the 21st day of November, 1832,
aged 44 years.

Erected by the Savannah
Volunteer Guards, which corps
he for a period of years commanded, as
a tribute of affection for his qualities
as a Man, a Soldier, and a Patriot.
*Munera parva quidem, sed magnum
testantur amorem.*

Near by, in the same enclosure, is the tomb of his noble brother, Commodore Josiah Tattnall, one of the most honored of the honorary members of the Guards. On this significantly rests the effigy of a sheathed sword, and it bears the following inscription :

COMMODORE JOSIAH TATTNALL, U. S. & C. S. N.
Born near this spot Nov. 8, 1785.
Died June 14, 1871.

The second monument erected by the corps is in Laurel Grove Cemetery to Capt. Richardsone—a tasteful marble shaft with the following inscriptions. On the eastern face: "Erected by the Savannah Volunteer Guards in token of their regard for a beloved commander, and of their admiration for his virtues as a citizen." On the western face, on a shield within a bay wreath supported on cannon: "Cosmo P. Richardsone." On the southern face: "Born January 24th, 1804." On the northern face: "Died February 6th, 1852."

Within a few feet of the resting place of Capt. Richardsone is that of his friend and immediate successor in command, Capt. James P. Screven.

In Laurel Grove Cemetery the Guards hold two burial lots, numbers 46 and 726. In the former are interred Privates S. F. Ripley and John D. Carter, who died of yellow fever respectively in 1854 and 1876, and privates T. L. Robertson, John Maddox, John Johnson, A. F.

Whitlock and James D. Pardue. In this lot also is one grave containing the remains of eleven members of the battalion, who fell at Sailors creek, the last battle of the Army of Virginia, namely: King, Turner, Rice, Abney, McIntosh, Rouse, Millen, Gordon, Vickers, Cook and Barie, removed from Virginia along with Rice, James, Myddleton, Bowne, Grant and Bennett, who are interred in their respective family lots. In lot number 726 (the gift of 1st Lieut. Thomas J. Bulloch) are interred Privates Thomas D. Morel, James M. Mallette, Frederick Myers and James O. A. Simmons.

The motto of the Guards, graven on their corporate seal and borne on their colors is, "*Pro aris et focis.*"

This is but a sketch of the oldest infantry organization in the State, and one of the oldest in the United States, sustaining a clear and continuous record through all but two of the years of the present century. Its officers and privates, throughout this long and eventful period, have been governed by the principles embodied in the preamble, to their rules and regulations, to which they are pledged on admission—"to cultivate

those manly virtues, which are so much promoted by military exercises and associations." Hence, it is but true, that this organization has maintained the highest type of citizen soldiery and a school of military practice of great value to its own members, to Savannah and to the State. Long periods of peace may seem to convert soldiership untried in the field into mere holiday display; but when danger threatens, when riot and the torch are at hand, when the law demands its last enforcement, when invasion comes, when the honor and glory of the country must be asserted, how suddenly the drilled volunteer becomes the stay and comfort of the timid and weak, the guarantor of peace and order, the right arm of the State. When the laws are silent and those only are asserted which rest in the manly virtues of the disciplined soldier, the citizen who is skilled in arms, whose muscles are hardened to the musket and the march, whose heart is voluntarily trained in the stern school of patience, obedience and system which fits him for service and command alike, becomes the true unit of social and political order.

